

# EDITORIALS BY THE TRAILITY

## Law of Love Highest in Human Life.

By Count Leo Tolstoi.



AS FAR back as we know the social life of man, we know that besides family, tribal, and commercial relations men were also bound together by the subject of the many to one or several rulers. This subject of some by others—of the majority by the minority—was so general to all nations and had existed so long that all men, both those in power over the many and those who submitted to them, considered such an arrangement of life inevitable, natural, and the only one possible for social human existence. The rulers considered that, being ordained by God himself to have power over the people, they ought to try to use their power in the best way to secure a quiet, peaceful, and happy life for their subjects.

In all the religious teachings of the ancient world—in Brahmanism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism, as well as in the teachings of the Greek and Roman sages, alongside of the confirmation of the power of those who rule by force—another teaching was always expressed in various ways: the teaching that mutual love is the best means of uniting men, since it gives them the greatest blessedness. That thought has been variously expressed, and with various degrees of clearness, in the different eastern teachings; but 1,900 years ago it was expressed with striking clearness and definiteness in Christianity. Christianity showed men not merely that love is a means of human intercourse which gives happiness but also that love is the highest law of life, and

that, therefore, the law of love is incompatible with the former order of things founded on violence.

The chief significance of Christianity and its distinction from all former teachings that preached love lay in the fact that, having proclaimed the law of love to be the highest law of life and one admitting of no exceptions, but always obligatory, it indicated those customary divergences from the law of love which, together with an acknowledgment of the beneficence of love, had been tolerated in the old order of life, founded on the power (supported by violence) of the rulers. Under the old order of life, violence, including killing in self-defense or in defense of one's neighbors or of one's country or in punishment of crime, etc., was a necessary condition of social life.

But Christianity, making love the highest law of life, regarding all men as equal, preaching the forgiveness of every offense, injury, or deed of violence and the return of good for evil, could never in any case allow the violence of one man to another, which always has death itself as a last resource.

Such was and is the chief significance of Christianity. But those who accepted Christianity, having for ages lived under a complex governmental system resting on force, when they adopted Christianity, not understanding its full import, or partly understanding but trying to hide it from themselves and others, accepted only as much of Christianity as was not contrary to their established way of life; and church teaching that grew up on original Christianity, having united the teaching of Christ with the ancient Hebrew teaching, hid the essence of Christianity so skillfully under dogmas and injunctions quite foreign to it that violence, evidently incompatible with true Christianity, began

to be looked upon both by the rulers and by the ruled not only as not foreign to the Christian law of love but as quite lawful and accordant with it.

Men lived, submitting to violence and committing it, and yet professed the teaching of love, which clearly rejected violence. That inner contradiction was always present in the Christian world and became more and more evident as men became more and more developed mentally. In the other, larger, non-Christian half of the human race, in Egypt, India, and China (I do not speak of the Mohammedan world, which lived according to a teaching that grew out of Christianity), in Brahmanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism, where the law of love was also proclaimed to men living according to the law of violence, the contradictions between the two incompatible theories was not so sharp or so strong as in Christianity. But though in the religious teachings of the east, India and China, the incompatibility of the law of love with the law of violence was not so plainly pointed out as in Christianity, that inner contradiction has done and is doing its work in the non-Christian world also, making more and more clear to men the necessity of changing the old, outlived principle of violence for the law of love, which from various sides is entering men's consciousness.

Acknowledgment of the law of love, that was to supplant violence, penetrated human consciousness more and more, yet life continued on its old bases.

So things went on for centuries. But the time came when in spite of all the efforts of the rulers and their helpers the truth that the law of love is the highest law of human life, and that therefore violence, incompatible with love, cannot be the highest law of life—a truth so

natural to and innate in man's spiritual nature and that was expressed more or less clearly in all religious teachings, and especially so in Christianity—entered more and more into the consciousness of men, and in our day the majority of men have become more or less conscious of it. As it is impossible to extinguish a fire by smothering it with shavings, so, when once it had kindled in human consciousness, it was impossible to stifle the truth so clearly expressed in all religious teachings and so near to the hearts of men, that the unity natural to man is unity based on love and not on force.

And this truth, not directly expressed but stated in various propositions and demands that were its outcome, appeared everywhere more and more frequently, seeking application in life. Thus, in the Christian world sooner than elsewhere this truth appeared in demands for the equality of citizens (though only those of one and the same state), for the abolition of slavery, the acknowledgment of the rights of women, as well as in the teachings of socialism, communism, and anarchism. And this truth has and is manifesting itself in all sorts of unions and peace congresses, and in many different sects, Christian as well as Mohammedan, which flatly deny violence, and free themselves from subjection to it.

All the people of the world, though they do not yet acknowledge the law of love in its full meaning, already feel the impossibility of continuing to live according to the old law of force, and seek a basis for their mutual intercourse more accordant with the spiritual growth of humanity.

And there is only one such basis, and it was announced thousands of years ago by the world's best men.

## Reincarnation Fallacy of Far East.

By Dr. J. M. Peebles.



WHETHER religion was born from the sleeping savage, from the animism of the lower races, or from the unfolding law of evolution matters little to the solid thinker. It is present in all bibles, and in connection with science, philosophy, and metaphysics it is ever struggling with the great problem of existence here and hereafter.

The theory of reincarnation imported from India and generally repellant to science and the deeper psychic research has quite a number of believers in the arena of modern thought. And while not taught in the holy vedas, it is almost universal as a belief among Hindus and Buddhists. The 40,000,000 of India's Mohammedans reject it with scorn, pronouncing it a mischievous heresy. Shisir Kanti Ghose, a noted magazine editor of Calcutta, informed his readers a few months since that "the doctrine of rebirth was invented about Buddha's time."

Whenever the theory was invented, reincarnation had nothing to do with original Theosophy as taught by its founders while living and writing in America; but reaching India and sensing the Hindu pulse, they quickly became its converts and advocates. It is an indisputable fact that the brightest young Hindus attending the schools and universities of India, and graduating later from universities

in Germany, or from Oxford and Cambridge, coming into relations with a higher science of thought and philosophy, return to India relieved of that cumbersome burden that the resurrected are doomed to return to babyhood through repeated rebirths into the flesh, in order to reach heaven.

At best reincarnation is but a quaint oriental speculation. Think of it—reincarnated again and again to battle with enticing temptations and vicious environments, with the possibility—aye, the probability—of sinking deeper into sin upon each bodily replanting. And then a plurality of unremembered past lives, however numerous, with their experiences, could not serve as preventives of further wrongs, nor could they be incentives to virtue. Sri Sumangala of Colombo, Ceylon, informed us that Gautama Buddha passed through 48,000 rebirths before attaining the exaltation of Nirvana.

No array of great names is the equivalent of demonstration, and it is deplorable that a class of wordy writers persist in using the words reincarnation and preexistence interchangeably. They are not synonyms. Exaggerations weaken instead of strengthen arguments. Pythagoras, Virgil, Ovid, Lessing, Taggart, Wordsworth, Browning, and two-thirds of the other great names often mentioned as bolstering bulwarks in support of reincarnation did not believe in it, as a series of returning rebirths or ego-rotations. They did believe, however, in the soul's preexistence and descent into mortality, a well grounded and, by the way, a rational belief.

We are spirits now; enshrined, imprisoned in physical forms. And

each conscious spirit, the immortal ego, the Atman of the Sanskrit scholar doubtless, did preexist as a semi-detached portion of the infinite spirit, God. And in consonance with the divine will it incarnated for clearer individualization and manifestation into the material with its multifariousizations. This is utterly different from being thrust onto the rebirth wheel of a merciless Karma fate, returning and rereturning fleshward; and all this, too, with better opportunities hereafter, with heavenly teachers and stellar realms to explore in those unseen and immeasurable immensities.

"Special creation," outlined in the Babylonian tablets and partially systematized in the book of Genesis, is now a back chapter in the minds of advanced Christendom. Evolution has been substituted by scientists for the word creation. But evolution implies a preceding involution. This admits of no doubt; neither does the philosophy of heredity, which rationally accounts for all inequalities and diverse human characteristics. There is not a "genius" born which prenatal influences, impinging environments, and impressions from invisible sources will not reasonably account for, without resorting to the speculation of reincarnation.

The literature of this reincarnation cult abounds in the repeated, stereotyped phrase, "the inequalities of life," which inequalities, considered from the viewpoint of the whole, are among the choicest blessings. The reverse of inequality is sameness or deadly monotony. A forest of trees the same in kind, shape, and height would induce a distressing mania. If all births were equal, if there were no ignorance

to educate, no vicious to reclaim, reformers would be denied the pleasure of aiding the ill born and lifting up the depraved on to the higher planes of moral consciousness and a better life.

The test of a speculation, or of any theory, is its practicability. What, then, is the result of a 2,000 years' belief in reincarnation upon Hinduism?

Did the Hindus discover the potency of steam, did they put the railway system in practice, did they discover the Morse telegraphic communication, did they discover the telephone, or the spectroscopy, or the liquefaction of oxygen, radium, wireless telegraphy, electric light? What has the reincarnation cult done during centuries for the overthrow of child marriage, for removing the curse of caste, and for the physical and mental education of India's millions?

As an imported theory from the dreamy, imaginative east, reincarnation may be thus summarized: It is not based upon one well established scientific fact; it sets at defiance the law of evolution as ascending step by step through mineral, vegetable, man, angels, seraphs, gods; its 80,000,000 of believers in India, Tibet, Corea, Burma, constitute the most superstitious people on earth; it annihilates or stupefies memory for long periods of time; it degrades the aspirations of the spirit by rotating it back again and again into the meshes of matter; as a Karma force it knows nothing of mercy or forgiveness, mercilessly punishing souls in this life for wrongs committed in some previous existence; in brief, it is a mingling of Hindu magic and Tibetan superstition, eclipsing the mind and deepening every mystery of the universe.

## Graft Social Law Works' By=Product.

By Dr. Frank Crane.



CERTAIN chemical combinations of two substances produce a third. Hydrogen and oxygen joined together bring forth water. A certain metal brought into contact with a certain acid generates electricity.

These are physical laws that no one thinks of disputing. There is no chance or hit and miss or probability about them. Also, that two and three should make any other thing than five, is unthinkable.

The cosmic spiritual laws are just as accurate as the physical laws. That sin brings sorrow is every whit as inevitable as that starch in digestion brings sugar.

Now, there is a certain spiritual stuff called graft. It is a by-product of the social law works. It is worth knowing just how it is made, its chemical formula as it were. Here is the formula which all apprentices in the social factory ought to learn. A positive law plus a negative law sentiment produces graft.

This is true, not sometimes, nor too often, but absolutely and un-

avoidably. Given a legislature that enacts Puritan laws, and a city where prevails a wide open sentiment, and graft grows there as naturally as toadstools by a rotten stump.

The Anglo-Saxon is a queer bird. Taine tells us that our forefathers, when they first emerged into history, great white bodied, blue eyed, red headed savages, had two characteristics; first, they were highly religious, and, second, they were desperate drunkards.

These traits persist. People of English stock take their religion extravagantly and their pleasures brutally. Our religious traits are manifest in Wesleyan revivals, Salvation army campaigns, Moody, Eddys, and "Billy" Sundays. We cannot go along being mildly pious and pleasantly "cursed" at the same time, as do French and Spanish folk.

The minute you cross the English channel from France you notice a difference. In Paris people sip their alcoholic poisons genteelly; in London they gulp them down. In Paris a drinking place is decent, and mildly "woozy" men and women bask at the little tables on the sidewalks. In London the grog shops are vile, smelly, sawdust strewn, and full of bottle eyed, bleary loafers.

So we run our contradictory natures into our laws. In Spring-

field the able farmers meet in legislature and decree stiff, Puritan laws. That is where our moral self comes out. And in the large cities we elect "wide open" councils and mayors who are to see that these laws are evaded. That is where our other self appears.

We could not possibly be consistent. It isn't in the blood. We would never, no never, consent that our legislature should recognize drunkenness, gambling, and prostitution, and, instead of prohibiting, should acknowledge and regulate them. That would never do in America. Our moral leaders would have a continuous fit from Chicago to Cairo.

They do that sort of thing in Germany and in France. And their cities have practically no graft and are not controlled by a criminal coterie.

And, on the other hand, we could not elect a city administration in Chicago that would simply and honestly enforce the laws made at Springfield. That is also impossible. Public sentiment never has sustained and would not now sustain such officers. No, we will go on doing the two unmixable things: we will make Puritan laws and elect Cavalier mayors.

And the sure result every time is graft. Because, when the police

force understands that it is not to enforce law, but to interpret law, and to use its judgment, and all that, it becomes corrupt, as an army would become corrupt which should understand that it was not to fight, rout, and kill the enemy, but to fire off its guns and nurse the enemy along.

With one kind of law and another kind of local sentiment, there arise strange, shapeless monsters like the Frank brothers, unrecognized by law, but produced by the nature of things; and through them the underworld of vice controls the community.

The only way to get rid of graft is to abolish the cause of graft. Take the copper out of the blue vitriol and the electricity will die away. Either make laws that represent the sentiment of the people, or elect officers that know nothing but to enforce the highly moral laws we now have.

We will do neither. Graft will grow right along. Occasionally when some peculiarly atrocious crime is committed, or when the graftsmen have a quarrel among themselves about the spoils, we will have an eruption like the present McCann trial. But the pus is in our system—all the worse when there is no eruption.

## Final Solution of the Social Problem Awaits Only Man's Understanding of Issues Involved.

THERE are few among us who have not some acquaintance with the social question. But there are not so many who have tried to gain some clear idea of what it is all about. To many it is something to shudder at. Visions of guillotine and rivers of blood as moneyless hands grasp the possessions so laboriously earned and so carefully hoarded by others—that is what many once understood by the social question.

But that panicky and childish understanding of the matter is now limited to the demagogue of lower rank. It may, indeed, be true that here and there social conflicts in the present may lead to violent and bloody catastrophes as in the past. But that does not reach the kernel of the problem; that depends entirely upon the mental and moral average of the opposing forces in the conflict; that has to do with the military tactics, so to speak, not with the cause or object about which the war is waged.

Therefore, others explain the social question as the labor question, one party holding that all human life should be regulated according to the economic views of the laborer; another, that better, worthier, human conditions of existence should be provided for the laborer; still another, that all the laborer wants is to get more and work less—that all the labor "kick" shows is that the masses are at once greedy and lazy.

But a man of more discernment soon sees that the social question is also important to the contractor, to the public servant, to the teacher and scholar—to all of us, rich or poor, man or woman—that it is, therefore, far more comprehensive than the mere labor question.

What precisely is it, then, that agitates us so? What is this social problem, this thing which crosses our path at every turn, which hobbles us again just when we think we have done with it? Now it is called the "stomach question," now the moral, now the religious—but it is ever the same problem, only looked at from another side. The point that I now urge is that the whole social war of our time is up in the air, unless we gain some clear understanding concerning this fundamental question. But this understanding is not to be acquired from books nor from some one man, but from the last century itself, from history, and from the divine life of which history is the revelation.

So long as there has been human society at all, a formed collective life of man, there have been these conflicts which, because they issue from the womb of society itself, we call social conflicts, in distinction from political struggles where a people or a state wage war against another. Oppressed classes, having no rights of their own—like slaves, serfs, bondsmen—have rebelled against their oppressors; uprising

he risen from the dead and looked about him, he would have believed that it was a world of enchantment which the free man of the nineteenth century had created.

It was precisely this freedom of man in which new problems and tasks were concealed. The man of the nineteenth century, too, was rooted in the past. Everywhere did he see himself surrounded with survivals and after effects of old forces whose right to exist he could no longer acknowledge, but which clamored for his acknowledgment.

So we see this man, this free man of the nineteenth century, as he grows and stretches his limbs, bumping his head against the ceiling of the room in which he had to live. Suppose now he holds the ceiling, suppose he depends absolutely upon himself alone, this free man, trusting his own living and creative energies alone—what then? Is it wisdom's last word that society, whose clashing components nevertheless once formed a whole, shall now resolve into its atoms, into its individual men, so that the former battle of stand against

stand shall intensify into the fiercer battle of man against man?

Or does the ancient wisdom hold good for the free man, that man is a social animal, so that we only need new social forms wherein the individual can find new, more vital union with his fellowmen in whose society alone he can become truly man?

This is the great social question. This is the sign of the times in which we live, the question whether the individual man is for the sake of society or whether the society is for the sake of the individual man? This noisy turbulence with which our cultural humanity pushes on its way, is it multitudinous jubilation of those who feel themselves loosed from rusty old chains and revel in the fullness of their strength, or it is the anxious cry which drowns the death rattle in the throat of the mortally wounded, the desperate cry of broken hearts to whom the new day of freedom has brought only curse and ruin?

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In former centuries it was the lower classes of society in which the misery of existence released itself finally in social warfare. Today it is the thinking spirits, the leaders and exponents of intellectual culture indeed, in whom the social question erupts, a problem of inquiry and knowledge, out of the war of instinct and might.

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Now, as to the cheap novel, it has unquestionably affected authors' earnings. Here, again, it is a case of reaction following a "boom." Absurd prices have been paid to authors for cheap books, and, naturally, these prices have had to come down with a run. Then, again, with the cheap novel there is the influence of growing competition. A publisher must sell 50,000 copies of a cheap book to make a profit. That was possible enough at first, when there was little or no competition, but now, when the market is flooded with cheap novels, there are not 50,000 readers for all of them, or anything like all of that. I am not prejudiced against the cheap novel; I am often guilty of buying it myself, because for a few cents you get a book worth keeping. Nevertheless, in my opinion, the cheap novel will end by committing suicide.

"Personally, I think that the higher priced novel will live, as the best edition for the libraries and the library subscriber. But for the bookshop trade, on which I can claim to speak with some authority, I believe that the medium priced novel is the novel of the future. Anyway, my experiment in publishing William Le Queux's novel, 'The House of Whispers,' at 50 cents has been immensely successful—the book-sellers' returns being more than satisfactory. As to the future in general, the outlook from the author's point of view is no doubt rather gloomy; he has heavy over-draws to make good—but I believe things will right themselves, provided that authors and literary agents recognize that even a publisher must live."

greatest interest in the social problem, not the mass of proletariat who live their stupid lives day after day at time or dream of the might of miracle and Messiah to turn the world upside down.

Inasmuch as it is man that is the center of the social question, that question is the focus in which all the single questions of our day, call them what we may, are unified. Just because the question is so great, so all-inclusive, it gathers up everything else, born of the creative life of our period. The science of the last century, from natural science to mental science, did not stop till it landed here. And even art, because the artist had a warm heart stirred by the great questions of our modern life, left the sacred ideals of beauty in the lurch and turned to the bread and butter realism. Nothing can chain the attention of man today which does not bear upon the torture of this problem—the contradiction—manifest in our social problem—namely: free man, the individual, is bound in all the fibers of his being to the eternal law of humanity and yet cannot find his right attitude to that law; man who sings his proud triumphant song of victory over the stubborn forces of nature yet impotently confronts the forces of his own human life that mistreat him more grievously than all the destructive agencies of nature itself.

Now, if this question is the heritage which the nineteenth century received from the history of its predecessors, then, too, it is God, who has propounded it to our generation, who brings it home to each and all of us; and then, too, it is guilt, it is sin against the Holy Spirit, to stop our ears to this question, to disregard the clearest signs of the times.

Even our churches divide on this question. One has its faith for its own private consumption; therewith they pay the premium to insure their own little selves against the misfortunes of life, of death also, it may be. Another would mount above themselves by their faith, by faith would they open their hearts to every truth, consecrate themselves to every task, which seems to them to be right and good, necessary and therefore divine. The former kind of faith, no matter how pretentious and aristocratic it may be, is godless; the latter, even if it does not understand itself yet, as perhaps it does not, is the more religious because God's eternal life is thereby present and operative in man.

Or shall we deny that God asks questions? Do we think that questions are our affair, and that it is God's affair to answer our questions? On the contrary, no question asked by man alone receives an answer from God. Such questions would be questions of folly, of smartness, of idle curiosity, not the serious questions of conscience, of truth, and righteousness. It is by the questions which God awakens in the human

heart that he educates man and prepares him for the answers which he has ready for man in the womb of time. Hence, with reference to man's impulses to freedom, God himself has raised the great question, since he shows us how this impulse in numberless beings only aggravates the misery of their existence, and with reference to the social impulse has he raised the same question, when human nature, still unconscious of the right way, is thereby betrayed into self-contradiction, until, from the two questions the great question of our day has arisen, so violent in every land, so menacing in every heart and home, that the uproar is enough to awaken the dead.

But when men have once truly understood what this question is about, God's answer will be ready. God will solve the social question, as he alone has asked it. He will solve it with us and by us and for us when we understand the signs of the times and are obedient to his will. He will solve it without us and against us, if we selfishly and stubbornly go our own way, and think that we can resist his will.

When? How? Of that no man knows. Only one thing is antecedently certain—in God's solution of the social question nothing can be lost or what he has himself given of his own life to humanity as it has ever gone on its weary and pathetic pilgrimage into the untrodden years.

But why should we be fearful and faithless? Can men hinder or ruin or even make a blot of the work of the eternal? They can only harm themselves. But he can make the wrath of man praise him. The ignorance and malice of men are only the withered leaves whose decay supplies new forces of resurrection and life. There is much of the odor of the decay around us today, and much which is praised with loud acclaim as glorious was the death mark on its forehead. Hence many an honest and brave heart asks: What will be the outcome of it all?

Many who once thought that they had been called to be prophets sit low-spirited by the wayside and are resentful because they no longer find themselves at home in our time with its strange appearance. So long as we do not see the life of God in this great problem of our day, our time will seem more confused and contradictory than any other which humanity has ever known.

It is ours to be grateful that we live in a day when the greatest question which man can know is being slowly solved. A great problem makes time great. It is ours to keep our ear close to the beating heart of modern humanity, hearken for the voice of God in the unrest, that God who has made us for himself and who means that we shall be restless until we, as Augustine said, rest in him.